

CAPSULE SUMMARY

BA-1064

441 East Pennsylvania Avenue

East Towson, Baltimore County

Circa 1925

Private

The dwelling at 441 East Pennsylvania Avenue was constructed circa 1925 in the East Towson neighborhood of Baltimore County. The history of East Towson dates from the purchase of one-and-a-quarter acres of land by Daniel Harris in September 1853. This is believed to be the first documented African-American landholding in Towson, and is among the oldest such ethnic enclave in Baltimore County. Further, manumitted slaves and/or descendants of former slaves, many of who were owned by Charles Ridgely, populated the neighborhood. Hampered by the low economic status of the residents, development in the 19th century was slow, increasing after the turn of the 20th century. The setting of the property, building styles, and construction materials were guided by the limited economic status of the residents and their desire to establish a neighborhood of their own without the assistance of white architects, builders, and craftsmen. By 1927, the community was ninety-five percent improved with single-family dwellings, social buildings, a school, and religious structures.

Fronting southwest on a sloping grassy lot with a gravel driveway, this property is surrounded by mature trees and shrubs and fronts close to the road. To the east, is a paved parking lot and a large industrial building. Presenting a rectangular plan with asymmetrical fenestration, the dwelling stands two-and-a-half stories high and three bays wide on a solid parged foundation. One story in height, the full-width shed roof porch on the façade is supported with wood posts and a cross-braced wood balustrade. The side passage entrance contains a non-historic single-leaf metal flush door with a fanlight. Seen on the first story are elongated 4/4 double-hung wood sash windows. The second-story façade features a three-sided cut-away bay with 6/6 double-hung vinyl sash windows with aluminum square-edged surrounds. The front gable roof features a 1/1 double-hung vinyl sash window. Above the asphalt shingle roof and overhanging eaves is one stretcher-bond brick chimney. The dwelling is clad with wood coursed shingles. A circa 1990s gable roof wood frame addition is seen to the rear.

Maryland Historical Trust

Maryland Inventory of Historic Properties Form

Inventory No. BA- 1064

1. Name of Property (indicate preferred name)

historic

other

2. Location

street and number 441 East Pennsylvania Avenue not for publication

city, town Baltimore vicinity

county Baltimore County

3. Owner of Property (give names and mailing addresses of all owners)

name Michael A. Miller

street and number 441 E. Pennsylvania Avenue telephone Not Available

city, town Baltimore state MD zip code 21286-5409

4. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Baltimore County Courthouse liber 6177 folio 564

city, town Towson tax map 70 tax parcel 69 tax ID number 923501110

5. Primary Location of Additional Data

- ☐ Contributing Resource in National Register District
☐ Contributing Resource in Local Historic District
☐ Determined Eligible for the National Register/Maryland Register
☐ Determined Ineligible for the National Register/Maryland Register
☐ Recorded by HABS/HAER
☐ Historic Structure Report or Research Report at MHT
☐ Other: _____

6. Classification

Category	Ownership	Current Function	Resource Count
<input type="checkbox"/> district	<input type="checkbox"/> public	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture	Contributing
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> building(s)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private	<input type="checkbox"/> commerce/trade	Noncontributing
<input type="checkbox"/> structure	<input type="checkbox"/> both	<input type="checkbox"/> defense	1
<input type="checkbox"/> site		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> domestic	
<input type="checkbox"/> object		<input type="checkbox"/> education	
		<input type="checkbox"/> funerary	
		<input type="checkbox"/> government	
		<input type="checkbox"/> health care	
		<input type="checkbox"/> industry	
		<input type="checkbox"/> landscape	
		<input type="checkbox"/> recreation/culture	
		<input type="checkbox"/> religion	
		<input type="checkbox"/> social	
		<input type="checkbox"/> transportation	
		<input type="checkbox"/> work in progress	
		<input type="checkbox"/> unknown	
		<input type="checkbox"/> vacant/not in use	
		<input type="checkbox"/> other:	
			1
			Total
			Number of Contributing Resources previously listed in the Inventory
			1

7. Description

Inventory No. BA- 1064

Condition

<input type="checkbox"/> excellent	<input type="checkbox"/> deteriorated
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> good	<input type="checkbox"/> ruins
<input type="checkbox"/> fair	<input type="checkbox"/> altered

Prepare both a one paragraph summary and a comprehensive description of the resource and its various elements as it exists today.

Fronting southwest on a sloping grassy lot with a gravel driveway, this property is surrounded by mature trees and shrubs and fronts close to the road. To the east is a paved parking lot and a large industrial building. Presenting a rectangular plan with asymmetrical fenestration, the dwelling stands two-and-a-half stories high and three bays wide on a solid parged foundation. One story in height, the full-width shed roof porch on the façade is supported with wood posts and a cross-braced wood balustrade. The side passage entrance contains a non-historic single-leaf metal flush door with a fanlight. Seen on the first story are elongated 4/4 double-hung wood sash windows. The second-story façade features a three-sided cut-away bay with 6/6 double-hung vinyl sash windows with aluminum square-edged surrounds. The front gable roof features a 1/1 double-hung vinyl sash window. Above the asphalt shingle roof and overhanging eaves is one stretcher-bond brick chimney. The dwelling is clad with wood coursed shingles. A circa 1990s gable roof wood frame addition is seen to the rear.

8. Significance

Inventory No. BA- 1064

Period	Areas of Significance	Check and justify below			
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600-1699	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture	<input type="checkbox"/> economics	<input type="checkbox"/> health/medicine	<input type="checkbox"/> performing arts	
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology	<input type="checkbox"/> education	<input type="checkbox"/> industry	<input type="checkbox"/> philosophy	
<input type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> engineering	<input type="checkbox"/> invention	<input type="checkbox"/> politics/government	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1900-1999	<input type="checkbox"/> art	<input type="checkbox"/> entertainment/ recreation	<input type="checkbox"/> landscape architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> religion	
<input type="checkbox"/> 2000-	<input type="checkbox"/> commerce	<input type="checkbox"/> ethnic heritage	<input type="checkbox"/> law	<input type="checkbox"/> science	
	<input type="checkbox"/> communications	<input type="checkbox"/> exploration/ settlement	<input type="checkbox"/> literature	<input type="checkbox"/> social history	
	<input type="checkbox"/> community planning		<input type="checkbox"/> maritime history	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation	
	<input type="checkbox"/> conservation		<input type="checkbox"/> military	<input type="checkbox"/> other:	

Specific dates 1925 ca.

Architect/Builder Unknown

Construction dates 1925 ca.

Evaluation for:

☐ National Register

☐ Maryland Register

☒ not evaluated

Prepare a one-paragraph summary statement of significance addressing applicable criteria, followed by a narrative discussion of the history of the resource and its context. (For compliance projects, complete evaluation on a DOE Form – see manual.)

The house at 441 East Pennsylvania Avenue was constructed circa 1925 in the East Towson neighborhood of Baltimore County. East Towson is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history, specifically the pre-Civil War development of an African-American neighborhood in a predominately white community. The history of this property dates from the purchase of one-and-a-quarter acres of land by Daniel Harris in September 1853. This is believed to be the first documented African-American landholding in Towson, and is among the oldest such ethnic enclave in Baltimore County. Further, manumitted slaves and/or descendents of former slaves, many of who were owned by Charles Ridgely, populated the neighborhood. Hampered by the low economic status of the residents, development in the 19th century was slow, increasing after the turn of the 20th century. The setting of the property, building styles, and construction materials were guided by the limited economic status of the residents and their desire to establish a neighborhood of their own without the assistance of white architects, builders, and craftsmen. By 1927, the community was ninety-five percent improved with single-family dwellings, social buildings, a school, and religious structures. Many of the current homeowners and tenants living in the neighborhood are descendents of the first African-American residents.

East Towson as a whole is representative of an important phase of architectural development in Baltimore County, illustrating the dilution of popular architectural styles to more efficiently meet the needs of the neighborhood, and the builders' untrained abilities to execute the fashionable ornamentation. Thus, East Towson provided lower cost housing in a more suburban neighborhood, rather than the urban setting their economic status typically perpetuated.

9. Major Bibliographical References

Inventory No. BA- 1064

Atlas of Baltimore County, Maryland. Philadelphia, PA: G. M. Hopkins, 1877.

Baltimore County Historic Inventory.

Brooks, Neal A. and Eric G. Rockel. *A History of Baltimore County.* Towson, MD: Friends of the Towson Library, Inc., 1979.

Map of Baltimore County. Philadelphia, PA: G. W. Bromley, 1915.

Scharf, J. Thomas. *History of Baltimore City and County From the Earliest Period to the Present Day: Including Biographical Sketches of Their Representative Men.* Philadelphia, PA: Louis H. Everts, 1881. Reprinted by Higginson Book Company, Salem, MA.

Sidney, J. C. *Map of the City and County of Baltimore, Maryland, from Original Surveys.* Baltimore, MD: James M. Stephens, 1850.

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of surveyed property .35 Acre

Acreage of historical setting Unknown

Quadrangle name Towson

Quadrangle scale: 1:24,000

Verbal boundary description and justification

The house is located at 441 East Pennsylvania Avenue in East Towson in the Ninth District of Baltimore County. It has historically been associated with Tax Map 70, Parcel 69 since its construction circa 1925.

11. Form Prepared by

name/title	K. Baynard, J. Bunting, R. Weidlich, Architectural Historians		
organization	EHT Traceries, Incorporated	date	December 28, 2001
street & number	1121 5th Street NW	telephone	202.393.1199
city or town	Washington	state	DC

The Maryland Inventory of Historic Properties was officially created by an Act of the Maryland Legislature to be found in the Annotated Code of Maryland, Article 41, Section 181 KA, 1974 supplement.

The survey and inventory are being prepared for information and record purposes only and do not constitute any infringement of individual property rights.

return to: Maryland Historical Trust
DHCD/DHCP
100 Community Place
Crownsville, MD 21032-2023
410-514-7600

East Towson: Planimetric Data



BA #: 1064
Name: House, 441 Pennsylvania Avenue
East Towson
Baltimore County



Prepared by:
Baltimore County Office of Planning
401 Bosley Avenue
Towson, Maryland 21204
June, 2001



Scale
1 inch = 200 feet
1:2400
100 0 100 200 Feet

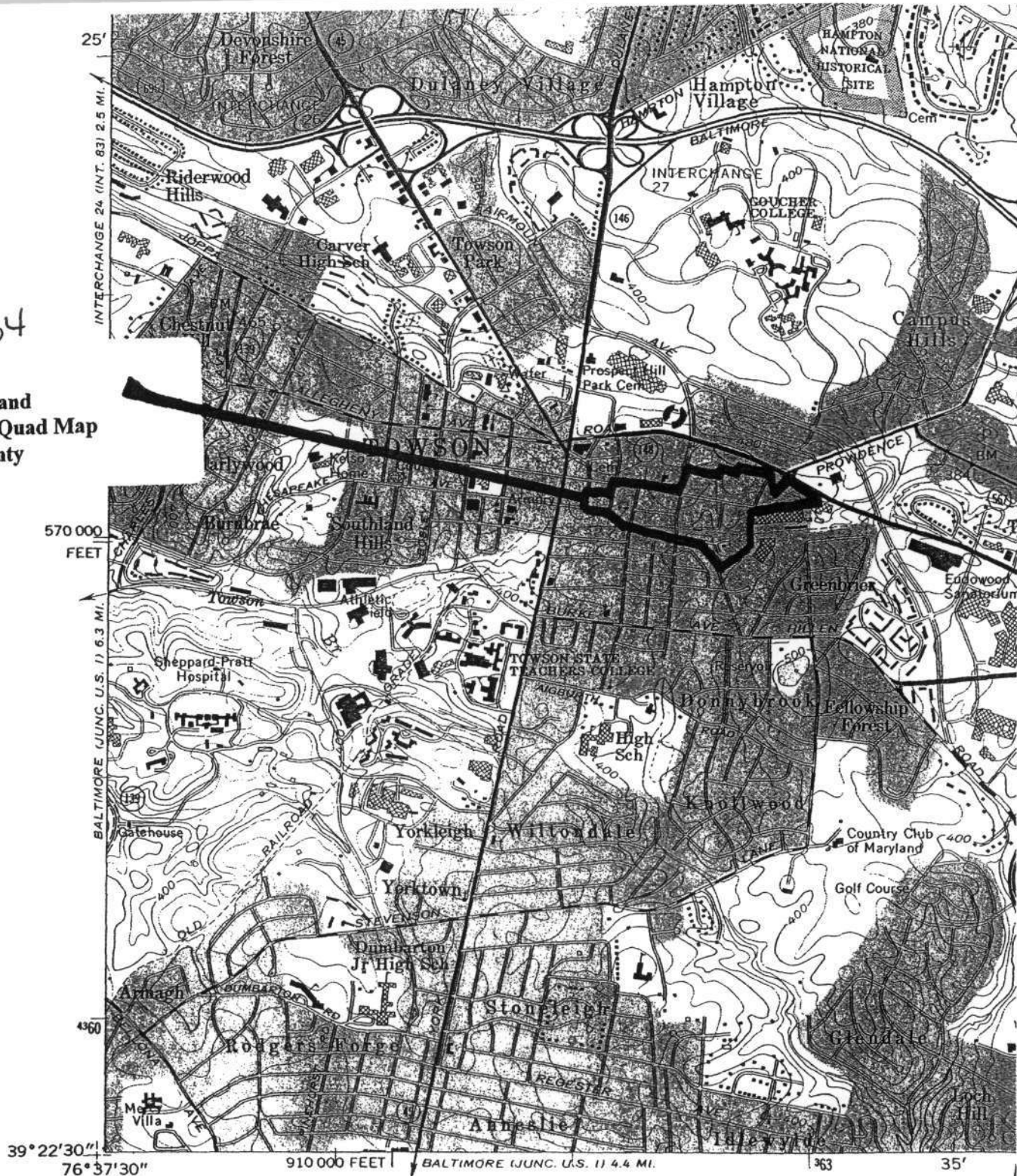
Legend

- Study Area Boundary
- Paved Roads
- Unpaved Roads
- Paved Parking / Driveways
- Hydrographic Features
- Buildings
- Vegetation

Data Sources:
Planimetric Data: Baltimore County OIT GIS Services Unit (1:2400)
Parcel Boundaries: Baltimore County OIT GIS Services Unit (1:2400)
Study Area: Baltimore County Office of Planning (1:2400)
Coordinate System:
- Maryland State Plane: NAD83/91 Horizontal Datum
Elevations in Feet: NAVD83 Vertical Datum
Date of Data Capture: March 1996
Scale of Data Capture: 1" = 100'

BA 1064

East Towson
Towson, Maryland
Towson USGS Quad Map
Baltimore County



(BALTIMORE WEST)
5662 1 SW

Mapped by the Army Map Service
Edited and published by the Geological Survey
Control by USGS, USC&GS, USCE, and Maryland
Bureau of Control Surveys and Maps

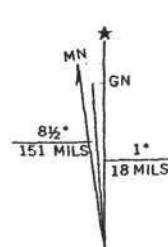
Culture and drainage in part compiled from aerial photographs
taken 1943. Topography by planetable surveys 1944
Culture revised by the Geological Survey 1957

Polyconic projection. 1927 North American datum
10,000-foot grid based on Maryland coordinate system
1000-metre Universal Transverse Mercator grid ticks,
zone 18, shown in blue

Red tint indicates areas in which only
landmark buildings are shown

Revisions shown in purple compiled by the Geological Survey from
aerial photographs taken 1966 and 1974. This information not
field checked

Purple tint indicates extension of urban areas



UTM GRID AND 1974 MAGNETIC NORTH
DECLINATION AT CENTER OF SHEET



BA-1064

HOUSE, 441 PENNSYLVANIA AVENUE

BALTIMORE County, MD

TRAILERIES

10/2001

MD-SHPO

SOUTH ELEVATION

1 of 3



BA-1064

HOUSE, 441 PENNSYLVANIA AVENUE
BALTIMORE COUNTY, MD

TRAILERIES

10/2001

MD-SHPD

NORTHWEST CORNER

2 of 3



BA-1064

HOUSE, 441 PENNSYLVANIA AVENUE

BALTIMORE COUNTY, MD

TRAILERIES

10/2001

MD-SHPD

WEST ELEVATION

3 of 3

MARYLAND HISTORICAL TRUST

MAGI #0310645704

INVENTORY FORM FOR STATE HISTORIC SITES SURVEY

1 NAME

HISTORIC THE ALBERT WILSON HOUSE

AND/OR COMMON

2 LOCATIONSTREET & NUMBER 441^x Pennsylvania Ave.

second

CITY, TOWN

Towson Md. 21204

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT

STATE

COUNTY

3 CLASSIFICATION

CATEGORY	OWNERSHIP	STATUS	PRESENT USE
<input type="checkbox"/> DISTRICT	<input type="checkbox"/> PUBLIC	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> OCCUPIED	<input type="checkbox"/> AGRICULTURE <input type="checkbox"/> MUSEUM
<input type="checkbox"/> BUILDING(S)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> PRIVATE	<input type="checkbox"/> UNOCCUPIED	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMERCIAL <input type="checkbox"/> PARK
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> STRUCTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> BOTH	<input type="checkbox"/> WORK IN PROGRESS	<input type="checkbox"/> EDUCATIONAL <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> PRIVATE RESIDENCE
<input type="checkbox"/> SITE	PUBLIC ACQUISITION	ACCESSIBLE	<input type="checkbox"/> ENTERTAINMENT <input type="checkbox"/> RELIGIOUS
<input type="checkbox"/> OBJECT	<input type="checkbox"/> IN PROCESS	<input type="checkbox"/> YES: RESTRICTED	<input type="checkbox"/> GOVERNMENT <input type="checkbox"/> SCIENTIFIC
	<input type="checkbox"/> BEING CONSIDERED	<input type="checkbox"/> YES: UNRESTRICTED	<input type="checkbox"/> INDUSTRIAL <input type="checkbox"/> TRANSPORTATION
		<input type="checkbox"/> NO	<input type="checkbox"/> MILITARY <input type="checkbox"/> OTHER

4 OWNER OF PROPERTY

NAME Mrs. William Albert Wilson

Telephone #: 825-3503

STREET & NUMBER 441 Pennsylvania Ave.

CITY, TOWN

Towson Md. 21204

STATE, zip code

VICINITY OF

5 LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTIONCOURTHOUSE,
REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.

Baltimore County Courthouse

Liber #:

Folio #:

STREET & NUMBER

401 Bosley Ave.

CITY, TOWN

Towson Md. 21204

STATE

6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE

BA-1064 - 441 Pennsylvania

1922

At the second floor level on the front gable end of this frame house, a bay window protrudes under a pent roof. Below this, a porch shades the first floor. The brown-shingled house is three bays wide by three long bays deep.

7 DESCRIPTION

BA-1064

CONDITION

☒ EXCELLENT
☐ GOOD
☐ FAIR

☐ DETERIORATED
☐ RUINS
☐ UNEXPOSED

CHECK ONE

☒ UNALTERED
☐ ALTERED

CHECK ONE

☐ ORIGINAL SITE
☐ MOVED DATE _____

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

441 Pennsylvania

Mrs. Wm. Albert Wilson

This stylish brown wood-shingled house was built by Ben and Willie Johnson in 1922 for William Albert Wilson. The rectangular house is three bays wide by three long bays deep and two stories tall. A hip-roofed porch crossing the south, or front, has thin wooden posts dividing the balustrade of crossed wooden members. On this facade a transomed door on the west leads into a stair hall, while the two 1/1 sash windows to the east light the adjacent parlor. On this facade a transomed door on the west leads into a stair hall while the second floor, a bay lit by three 1/1 windows swells into the porch roof. A pent roof at eaves level covers this projection. One vertical six-pane window lights the attic. On the west side, one window lights each bay on the second floor, while only one window, to the west, appears on the first floor. The east is similarly fenestrated. A shed-roofed porch crosses the north side.

The house rests on a slightly raised cellar. A cellar door is located in the central west bay. The interior of the house is divided into the front stair hall and parlor with two rooms behind. A square newel rises at the foot of the stair. The interior architraves are composed of a central curve flanked by double beads. This molding, in earlier houses, would intersect corner blocks, but here the corners are mitered.

Until recently the house was heated by its original coal furnace. The house is located on a large lot enclosed by a neat hedge.

CONTINUE ON SEPARATE SHEET IF NECESSARY

8 SIGNIFICANCE

BA-1064

PERIOD

☐ PREHISTORIC
☐ 1400-1499
☐ 1500-1599
☐ 1600-1699
☐ 1700-1799
☐ 1800-1899
☐ 1900-

☐ ARCHEOLOGY-PREHISTORIC
☐ ARCHEOLOGY-HISTORIC
☐ AGRICULTURE
☐ ARCHITECTURE
☐ ART
☐ COMMERCE
☐ COMMUNICATIONS

AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE -- CHECK AND JUSTIFY BELOW

☐ COMMUNITY PLANNING
☐ CONSERVATION
☐ ECONOMICS
☐ EDUCATION
☐ ENGINEERING
☐ EXPLORATION/SETTLEMENT
☐ INDUSTRY
☐ INVENTION

☐ LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE
☐ LAW
☐ LITERATURE
☐ MILITARY
☐ MUSIC
☐ PHILOSOPHY
☐ POLITICS/GOVERNMENT

☐ RELIGION
☐ SCIENCE
☐ SCULPTURE
☐ SOCIAL/HUMANITARIAN
☐ THEATER
☐ TRANSPORTATION
☐ OTHER (SPECIFY)

SPECIFIC DATES**BUILDER/ARCHITECT****STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE**

The William Albert Wilson House built in the early twenties was the last house built by local builders Willie and Ben Johnson.

This house has been owned and occupied by the Wilsons since its construction.

CONTINUE ON SEPARATE SHEET IF NECESSARY

9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

BA-1064

CONTINUE ON SEPARATE SHEET IF NECESSARY

10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY _____

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

LIST ALL STATES AND COUNTIES FOR PROPERTIES OVERLAPPING STATE OR COUNTY BOUNDARIES

STATE

COUNTY

STATE

COUNTY

11 FORM PREPARED BY

NAME / TITLE

Marcus Pollock/coordinator Merry Stinson/architect 7/77

ORGANIZATION

Committee to Save E. Towson/Towson Ymca

DATE

823-8870

STREET & NUMBER

600 W. Chesapeake Ave.

TELEPHONE

CITY OR TOWN

Towson Md. 21204

STATE

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RETURN TO: Maryland Historical Trust
The Shaw House, 21 State Circle
Annapolis, Maryland 21401
(301) 267-1438



BA-1064
Albert Wilson House
441 Pa. Ave.
Towson, Md.
South

Merry Stinson
1977